

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10, and 13-15 were pending in the above-identified application when last examined. Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10, and 13-15 stand rejected and the rejection was made final. Applicant is requesting continued examination of the above-identified patent application and entry of the above amendment, which amends claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, and 15 and adds claims 24-26.

In the Final Office Action, claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. The above amendment addresses the issues raised in the rejection as follows.

Independent claim 1 was indicated as being indefinite particularly with regard to how “the optoelectronic system asserts an electronic signal.” In response, claim 1 is amended to recite “an optoelectronic system ... generates an electronic timing signal based on propagation of the optical pulses.” Claim 1 was also indicated as being indefinite with regard to “timing of pulses relative to prior pulses returned from the optical timing system.” In response, claim 1 is amended to recite “an optical switching system coupled to direct one of the pulses from the semiconductor laser through the first optical waveguide or the second optical waveguide depending on when another of the optical pulses emerges from the optical timing system.”

Claim 5 was indicated as being indefinite with regard to reciting “a previous pulse path and a subsequent pulse path.” In response, claim 5 is amended to use first and second pulse paths instead of previous and subsequent pulse paths.

Claim 7 was indicated as being unclear with regard to how the system is configured to compare an actual arrival time of a subsequent pulse to an expected arrival time of the pulse. Claim 7 is amended to recite, “the optical switching system is configured to compare an actual arrival time of an optical pulse that has propagated through the optical timing system to an expected arrival time of the optical pulse.”

Independent claim 9 was indicated to be unclear with regard to “timing of the pulses relative to prior pulses returned from the optoelectronic timing system.” Claim 9 is amended to clarify that optical switching system directs “one of the optical pulses from the semiconductor laser through the first optical waveguide or the second optical waveguide

depending on when another of the optical pulses emerges from the optoelectronic timing system.”

Claim 10 was indicated as being unclear with regard to “timing of the pulse relative to return of a prior pulse through the timing system.” In response, claim 10 is amended to recite “operating the optical switching system directs each pulse from the semiconductor laser through the first, second, or third optical waveguide depending on when another of the pulses finishes propagating through the optical timing system.”

Claim 13 was indicated as being unclear with regard to use of a “previous pulse path” and a “subsequent pulse path.” Claim 13 is amended to instead use first and second pulse paths.

Claim 15 was indicated as being unclear with regard to how the system is configured to compare an actual arrival time of a subsequent pulse to an expected arrival time of the pulse. Claim 15 is amended to recite comparing “an actual arrival time of an optical pulse that has propagated through the optical timing system to an expected arrival time of the optical pulse.”

In view of the above amendments, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Final Office Action did not reject claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10, and 13-15 based on prior art. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the above amendments, which are being made to improve clarity, place claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10, and 13-15 in condition for allowance. New claims 24-26 depend from claim 1 and are similarly in condition for allowance.

For the above reasons, Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9, 10, 13-15, and 24-26 as presented above. Please contact the undersigned attorney at (530) 621-4545 if there are any questions concerning this document or the application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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